

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 DODE-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7868

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AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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USDOCOSOUTH

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T NICOSIA 2111

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CY, IS, UK

SUBJECT: AKROTIRI, F4'S AND ALLEGATIONS OF AID TO ISRAEL

1. PRO-GOVT "PHILELEFTHEROS" REPORTED THURSDAY THAT 57 U.S. F4'S HAD LANDED AT BRITISH BASE AKROTIRI AND 25 HAD GONE ON TO TURKEY. THIS PRESUMABLY IS VARIANT OF ALLEGATION REPORTED USUN 3869.

2. ON FRIDAY, DESPITE REPORTS OF U.K. DENIALS, "PHILELEFTHEROS" AND LEFTIST PAPERS BEGAN TO EDITORIALIZE AGAINST U.K. USE OF SBAS "EVEN INDIRECTLY" AGAINST ARABS.

3. LEFTIST TREATMENT PREDICTABLE. "PHILELEFTHEROS" FOCUS ON AKROTIRI MAY BE INTENDED TO DISPLAY NON-ALIGNED CREDENTIALS AND TO REMIND BRITS OF PROBLEMS WHICH CYPRUS GOVT WOULD HAVE IF

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AKROTIRI SHOULD BECOME INVOLVED. THIS ISSUE WILL INTENSIFY

LOCALLY IF FIGHTING CONTINUES, AND GOVT WILL BECOME EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO ANY APPEARANCE OF COLLABORATING IN AMERICAN ARMS SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL.

4. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT "CORONET EAST" OVERFLIGHTS ARE ROUTINELY CLEARED WITH GOVT OF CYPRUS. ALTHOUGH NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO ISRAEL, THESE FLIGHTS WOULD PROBABLY BECOME CONTENTIOUS IF THEY OCCURRED IN PRESENT CHARGED ATMOSPHERE. "PEACE ECHO" FLIGHTS EVEN MORE SENSITIVE. DANGER OF LEAKAGE SUBSTANTIALLY LESS, SINCE ONLY U.K. NEAR EAST AIR FORCE AT AKROTIRI IS NOTIFIED. WE UNDERSTAND "PEACE ECHO" FLIGHT SCHEDULED SATURDAY OR SUNDAY.

5. USAF AIRCRAFT HAVE IN PAST USED AKROTIRI AS EMERGENCY ALTERNATE FIELD. WE UNDERSTAND THEY HAVE IN PAST VISITED AKROTIRI WHEN NOT NECESSITATED BY EMERGENCY, POSSIBLY AS RECENTLY AS LAST SUMMER NATO EXERCISE.

6. WE SHOULD FOREWARN RECIPIENTS THAT BRITISH WOULD BE HIGHLY EMBARRASSED, AND WE COULD HAVE SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS HERE, IF U.S. AIRCRAFT WERE TO LAND IN OTHER THAN EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES. "PEACE ECHO" AND "CORONET EAST" FLIGHTS POTENTIALLY DAMAGING BUT OF COURSE MUST BE DECIDED ON BROADER ISSUES THAN POTENTIAL IMPACT ON CYPRUS.

7. EMBASSY INTENDS REFER ANY INQUIRIES RE AMERICAN PLANES AT AKROTIRI TO BRITS, MENTIONING BRITISH DENIAL IN UN.
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